



General Assembly

January Session, 2011

Raised Bill No. 1103

LCO No. 3969

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Referred to Committee on Education

Introduced by:
(ED)

AN ACT CONCERNING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-15 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

3 Public schools including school readiness programs, as defined in
4 section 10-16p, and kindergartens shall be maintained in each town for
5 at least one hundred eighty days of actual school sessions during each
6 year. When public school sessions are cancelled for reasons of
7 inclement weather or otherwise, the rescheduled sessions shall not be
8 held on Saturday or Sunday. Public schools may conduct weekend
9 education programs to provide supplemental and remedial services to
10 students. The State Board of Education (1) may authorize the
11 shortening of any school year for a school district, a school or a portion
12 of a school on account of an unavoidable emergency, and (2) may
13 authorize implementation of scheduling of school sessions to permit
14 full year use of facilities which may not offer each child one hundred
15 eighty days of school sessions within a given school year, but which
16 assures an opportunity for each child to average a minimum of one

17 hundred eighty days of school sessions per year during thirteen years
18 of educational opportunity in the elementary and secondary schools.
19 Notwithstanding the provisions of this section and section 10-16, the
20 State Board of Education may, upon application by a local or regional
21 board of education, approve for any single school year, in whole or in
22 part, a plan to implement alternative scheduling of school sessions
23 which assures at least four hundred fifty hours of actual school work
24 for nursery schools and half-day kindergartens and at least nine
25 hundred hours of actual school work for full-day kindergartens and
26 grades one to twelve, inclusive.

27 Sec. 2. Subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of section 10-16p of the
28 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
29 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

30 (d) (1) The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the
31 Commissioner of Social Services, shall establish a competitive grant
32 program to provide spaces in accredited school readiness programs for
33 eligible children who reside (A) in an area served by a priority school
34 or a former priority school as provided for in subdivision (2) of this
35 subsection, (B) in a town ranked one to fifty when all towns are ranked
36 in ascending order according to town wealth, as defined in subdivision
37 (26) of section 10-262f, whose school district is not a priority school
38 district pursuant to section 10-266p, or (C) in a town formerly a town
39 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision, as provided for in
40 said subdivision (2). A town in which a priority school is located, a
41 regional school readiness council, pursuant to subsection (c) of section
42 10-16r, for a region in which such a school is located or a town
43 described in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision may apply for such a
44 grant in an amount not to exceed one hundred seven thousand dollars
45 per priority school or town. Eligibility shall be determined for a five-
46 year period based on an applicant's designation as having a priority
47 school or being a town described in subparagraph (B) of this
48 subdivision for the initial year of application. Grant awards shall be
49 made annually contingent upon available funding and a satisfactory

50 annual evaluation. The chief elected official of such town and the
51 superintendent of schools of the school district or the regional school
52 readiness council shall submit a plan, as described in subsection (c) of
53 this section, for the expenditure of such grant funds to the Department
54 of Education. In awarding grants pursuant to this subsection, the
55 commissioner shall give preference to applications submitted by
56 regional school readiness councils and may, within available
57 appropriations, provide a grant in excess of one hundred seven
58 thousand dollars to [towns with two or more priority schools in such
59 district] any such town or regional school readiness council that makes
60 additional spaces available in an accredited school readiness program
61 for eligible children. A town or regional school readiness council
62 awarded a grant pursuant to this subsection shall use the funds to
63 purchase spaces for such children from providers of accredited school
64 readiness programs.

65 Sec. 3. Section 10-16y of the general statutes is repealed and the
66 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

67 [There shall be an Office of Early Childhood Planning, Outreach and
68 Coordination within the Department of Education. The office shall be
69 responsible for:

70 (1) Planning, developing and coordinating with other agencies the
71 delivery of services to children birth to nine years of age, inclusive;

72 (2) Coordinating the enhancement and implementation of the Early
73 Childhood Information System, in consultation with the Early
74 Childhood Education Cabinet established pursuant to section 10-16z,
75 with the capability of tracking: (A) The health, safety and school
76 readiness of all children receiving early care and education from any
77 local or regional board of education or any program receiving public
78 funding, in a manner similar to the system described in section 10-10a;
79 (B) the characteristics of the existing and potential workforce serving
80 such children in any local or regional school district or in a program
81 receiving any public funding; and (C) the characteristics of the

82 programs in which such children are served. The Department of
83 Education shall be responsible for assigning unique identifiers to all
84 such children and staff and programs tracked by the Early Childhood
85 Information System. Any local or regional board of education, school
86 readiness program, as defined in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
87 section 10-16p receiving any public funding, or any child day care
88 center described in subdivision (1) of section 19a-77 and licensed by
89 the Department of Public Health, including any participating in a
90 program administered by the Department of Social Services pursuant
91 to chapter 319rr, shall ensure that all children and all staff in such
92 center or program are entered into the Early Childhood Information
93 System.

94 (3) Developing and reporting on an early childhood accountability
95 plan, in consultation with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet;

96 (4) Implementing a communications strategy for outreach to
97 families, service providers and policymakers;

98 (5) Beginning a state-wide longitudinal evaluation of the school
99 readiness program, not later than January 1, 2010, in consultation with
100 the Department of Social Services, that examines the educational
101 progress of children from prekindergarten programs to grade four,
102 inclusive, including a study of the reliability and validity of the
103 kindergarten assessment tool developed pursuant to subsection (h) of
104 section 10-14n; and

105 (6) Developing, coordinating and supporting public and private
106 partnerships to aid early childhood initiatives.]

107 Not later than September 1, 2011, the Department of Education, in
108 consultation with the Department of Social Services, shall begin,
109 within available appropriations, a state-wide longitudinal evaluation
110 of the school readiness program that examines the educational
111 progress of children from prekindergarten programs to grade four,
112 inclusive, including a study of the reliability and validity of the

113 kindergarten assessment tool developed pursuant to subsection (h) of
114 section 10-14n.

115 Sec. 4. Section 10-16z of the general statutes is repealed and the
116 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2011*):

117 (a) There is established the Early Childhood Education Cabinet. The
118 cabinet shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of Education, or the
119 commissioner's designee, (2) one representative from the Department
120 of Education who is responsible for programs required under the
121 Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as
122 amended from time to time, appointed by the Commissioner of
123 Education, (3) the Commissioner of Social Services, or the
124 commissioner's designee, (4) a representative from an institution of
125 higher education in this state appointed by the Commissioner of
126 Higher Education, (5) the Commissioner of Public Health, or the
127 commissioner's designee, (6) the Commissioner of Developmental
128 Services, or the commissioner's designee, (7) the Commissioner of
129 [Mental Health and Addiction Services] Children and Families, or the
130 commissioner's designee, (8) the executive director of the Commission
131 on Children, or the executive director's designee, (9) the project
132 director of the Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Office, (10) a
133 [representative from a Head Start program] parent or guardian of a
134 child who attends or attended a school readiness program appointed
135 by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, (11) a
136 representative of a local provider of early childhood education
137 appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, (12) two appointed by
138 the speaker of the House of Representatives, one of whom is a member
139 of the House of Representatives and one of whom is a parent who has
140 a child attending a school in a priority school district, (13) two
141 appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one of whom is
142 a member of the Senate and one of whom is a representative of a
143 public elementary school with a prekindergarten program, (14) two
144 appointed by the Governor, one of whom is a representative of the
145 Connecticut Head Start Association and one of whom is a

146 representative of the business or philanthropic community in this
147 state, [appointed by the Governor,] and (15) the Secretary of the Office
148 of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee. The
149 chairperson of the council shall be appointed from among its members
150 by the Governor.

151 (b) Within available appropriations and such private funding as
152 may be available, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet shall (1)
153 coordinate among state agencies, as well as public and private
154 partnerships, the development of services that enhance the health,
155 safety and learning of children from birth to nine years of age,
156 inclusive, (2) not later than December 1, 2009, and annually thereafter,
157 develop an annual plan of action that assigns the appropriate state
158 agency to complete the tasks specified in the federal Head Start Act of
159 2007, P.L. 110-134, as amended from time to time, (3) develop and
160 implement the Early Childhood Information System with the
161 capability of tracking: (A) The health, safety and school readiness of all
162 children receiving early care and education from any local or regional
163 board of education or any program receiving public funding, in a
164 manner similar to the system described in section 10-10a, and (B) the
165 characteristics of the programs in which such children are served, (4)
166 implement a communications strategy for outreach to families, service
167 providers and policymakers, and [(3)] (5) not later than March 1, 2010,
168 and annually thereafter, submit an annual state-wide strategic report,
169 pursuant to said federal Head Start Act, in accordance with the
170 provisions of section 11-4a, addressing the progress such agencies have
171 made toward the completion of such tasks outlined under said federal
172 Head Start Act and this subsection to the Governor and the joint
173 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
174 matters relating to education and human services.

175 (c) The Early Childhood Education Cabinet shall be within the
176 Department of Education for administrative purposes only.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	10-15
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	10-16p(d)(1)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	10-16y
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2011</i>	10-16z

Statement of Purpose:

To require school districts to provide preschool; to provide additional school readiness grants to towns and regional school readiness councils that make additional spaces available in school readiness programs; to eliminate the Office of Early Childhood Planning, Outreach and Coordination and require the Department of Education to begin a state-wide longitudinal evaluation of the school readiness program; and to amend the membership of the Early Childhood Education Cabinet and add certain duties to the cabinet.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]